

CHAPTER 2. EXTENDED CARE DENTAL PROGRAM

SECTION I. ELIGIBILITY FOR DENTAL TREATMENT

2.01 TYPE AND EXTENT OF TREATMENT FURNISHED

Patients in domiciliaries and VA nursing home care units will be provided such dental treatment as is considered reasonably necessary to protect and maintain health. Consideration may be given to speech and appearance as essential to their rehabilitation. A continuing preventive dental care program including education in self-care oral hygiene practices will be maintained for all these beneficiaries.

2.02 ELIGIBILITY STATUS WHILE ON AUTHORIZED ABSENCE

Patients may be provided any necessary dental treatment required while on authorized absence from a domiciliary by presenting the identification card, VA Form 10-5510, to any VA facility having resources available to furnish these services. The record of treatment provided under this authority will be furnished the domiciliary concerned for inclusion in their treatment files.

SECTION II. EXAMINATION AND TREATMENT PROCEDURES

2.03 ORAL EXAMINATIONS

As most patients in nursing home care units are in an age group most susceptible to cancer, a thorough, intensive extra-oral and intra-oral soft tissue examination is essential. They will be examined by a dentist as an integral part of their initial physical examination. The initial examination will be accomplished as soon as possible after admission. These beneficiaries will be scheduled for reexamination at 6-months intervals (or as soon thereafter as conditions permit), and treatment planned as indicated.

2.04 TREATMENT PROCEDURES

Long-term patients are eligible to receive dental treatment following initial or subsequent examination by the dental service and medical review. The requirements for informed patient consent and completion of SF 522, Medical Record--Request for Administration of Anesthesia and for Performance of Operations and Other Procedures, as outlined in paragraph 4.06, will apply for these patients. Dental treatment may be requested by patients through referral by the physician in attendance. Continuing dental care will be coordinated with the attending physician and the dental records will be incorporated in the appropriate treatment folder. The need for any remaining dental care will be fully considered prior to discharge.

2.05 COORDINATION OF PRESCRIPTIONS FOR SELECTED DIETS

The treating dentist will coordinate with the dietetic service all prescriptions for selected diets initiated in the dental service on behalf of patients.

2.06 REPORTING UNCOOPERATIVE PATIENTS

Persistent failure of a patient to cooperate during an episode of treatment will be documented and referred to the attending physician, Chief of Staff or Chief, Domiciliary Operations, as appropriate, for consideration and indicated action.

2.07 COMMUNITY NURSING HOME CARE

a. A system of coordination with all services concerned will be established to assure that all needed dental treatment is accomplished before a beneficiary is discharged from a VA facility for placement in a community nursing home.

b. Emergency dental care for VA beneficiaries will be provided in accordance with the instructions outlined in M-1, part I, chapter 12, paragraphs 12.01c, 12.27 and/or 12.32.

c. VA beneficiaries requiring more than minor emergency dental care may be furnished such care under the provision of M-1, part I, chapter 12, paragraph 12.39.

2.08 QUALITY OF CARE--HSRO: SERP AND SIR

The same concerns for quality of care will apply for the Extended Care Dental Program as apply for the Inpatient Dental Program. Therefore, the same requirements and guidelines as set forth in paragraph 1.11 will be utilized.

(The provisions of ch. 2 are based on 38 U.S.C. 212 and 621.)

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